

**AL LAWSON**  
5TH DISTRICT, FLORIDA  
ASSISTANT MAJORITY WHIP  
COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES  
COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

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April 27, 2022

The Honorable Rosa L. DeLauro  
Chairwoman  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman and Ranking Member,

I am requesting \$2,000,000 in funding for South City Foundation Early Learning Center in fiscal year 2023 through the Innovation and Improvement Account.

The entity to receive funding for this project is South City Foundation, located at 1126-A Lee Ave, Tallahassee, FL 32303.

The funding would be used for a full-time, year-round school readiness program by highly trained and accredited staff; comprehensive family support services such as mental health, parenting skills, and nutrition and wellness; and an early learning training institute overseen by educators from Florida A&M University, Florida State University, and Tallahassee Community College, who will train early childhood professionals. The Centre will serve children ages 6 weeks to 5 years and their families, giving priority to those from the South City neighborhood and then to children from another nearby distressed community in Tallahassee, Apalachee Ridge. The Center's immediate goals will be to prepare neighborhood children to enter school with the tools they need to be successful and to engage in workforce development by training early childhood professionals.

The long-term goal of the Center is to prepare South City's children to enter into college and career fields successfully, which will elevate the skills of the neighborhood workforce, promote self-sufficiency, and break the cycle of intergenerational poverty. Under its holistic, family-centered approach, the Center will be giving children the skills and nurturing they require for school readiness and long-term success and provide parents with resources they can use to support their children and themselves. As a key economic component, the Center will engage in workforce training through its function as an early learning training institute. SCF's Center is not a daycare center. It is an educational institution, providing early childhood education as well as workforce training.

This is an important use of taxpayers money because studies show that investments in high-quality early learning programs deliver a 13.7% per child, per year return. Long-term outcomes when young children are enrolled in these quality programs include reduced crime, reduced special education costs, and reduced medical needs. Meanwhile, family caregivers relieved of 24/7 childcare

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responsibilities gain more education, work experience, and higher wages. South City is one of three neighborhoods having the highest crime rate in the Tallahassee area.

I certify that neither I nor my immediate family has any financial interest in this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Al Lawson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Al" and last name "Lawson" clearly distinguishable.

Al Lawson  
Member of Congress